

| Foreword

LANDSCAPE-CENTRAL

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Unfortunately, climate adaptation is not a short-term process. The spatial impact of climate change will be particularly severe in coastal areas. Necessary adjustments to the water management regime will therefore be drastic and take time to design, plan and implement. Moreover, owing to their size and character, these will have an impact on the coastal landscape and on the way in which this landscape is appreciated today from a leisure perspective. This makes it extremely important that projects such as SCAPE have the confidence to put the landscape and the long-lasting interplay between geology, economy and inhabitants at the centre of its thinking about climate adaptation.

With its Landscape Led Design principles, SCAPE brings pragmatism to the current debate on climate-adaptive approach to coastal areas. Authorities currently see themselves mainly as problem-solving instruments at the service of society. Complaints are not articulated by these authorities, but by the public, here and now. The authorities then look for answers in a goal-and-outcome oriented manner and come up with some technical, 'engineering-based' solutions that often have to be repeated every year. However, the real causes of the problems, be they historical or structural, remain untouched. By (re)connecting with the inherent vertical and horizontal logics that are present in the landscape and also shape it, the SCAPE project tries to challenge established approaches to water management. In this instance, working with landscape conditions to develop solutions becomes more prominent. Climate adaptation is therefore not limited to the current physical interventions by the authorities,

but becomes a fully-fledged societal exercise of co-design, in which authorities and communities redefine the norms of behaviour for countless individuals.

SCAPE rightly opposes the current, dominant practice of using the landscape as an afterthought, as a visual remedy for mainly technical solutions. The danger of a different kind of dominance lurks around the corner: that of an aesthetic design that moves rapidly away from any knowledge of hydrological, geological, ecological and socio-economic processes in the landscape. After all, such a design approach could result in the umpteenth green pendulum that is set down on paper by a designer with a grand gesture, but which in practice turns out to be at odds with soil conditions and water management and will in no time manifest itself as withered and worthless plants on the site. In other words, the engineer's notion of manipulability is no stranger to many so-called landscape designers either. SCAPE should therefore be read as a plea to generate and add value to the multi-scale knowledge about the landscape and related processes from the very start of a climate adaptation project, across disciplinary boundaries. The layer approach and the 'casco-concept' (framework concept) from the Netherlands are already several decades old, but they illustrate excellently how to involve the time dimension present in the landscape in the design. The layer approach assigns a different structuring effect in the landscape to the slowly changing subsurface, networks and the rapidly changing occupation layer. The casco-concept works with a low-dynamic framework for the slower processes in the

landscape and with intermediate meshes that can be filled in by high-dynamic activities. Without knowing it, they were probably Landscape Led Design before its time.

As it happens, by taking the relationships in the landscape as a starting point for developing climate adaptation strategies, SCAPE also opts for a systemic approach. Whereas technical solutions often suffer from myopia and do not consider the effects that one intervention causes in other places or at other times, Landscape Led Design is essentially about turning dials in a complex system. After all, landscape is a holistic construction, ecologically, technologically, socially and culturally. At first sight, this seems to lead to greater complexity as regards content and, consequently, to greater inertia in decision-making. At the same time, however, this approach also has the potential to enable various actors to detect and define shared opportunities. Not only does landscape, more than any other 'spatial' knowledge domain, offer a common language, it also opens up perspectives on linkage opportunities, as they are known, whereby climate adaptation objectives are linked to ambitions in terms of nature, agriculture, renewable energy or recreation. In this way, the achievement of climate-adaptive measures may also become a shared financial challenge. *It's the landscape, stupid!*

Hans Leinfelder
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LANDSCAPE LED DESIGN

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